

STIMULI TO IMITATION

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of those with whom we ~~live~~ ; we may indeed begin to stammer if we associate with a ~~stammerer~~ and are half-impelled to ~~expectorate~~ if we travel in America. Advertisements move us by their insistency. Personal influence receives the homage of imitation, especially from those who are not naturally self-assertive: one who is hypnotized abandons himself entirely to the suggestions of the hypnotist. Our imitative impulse is strengthened by the social instincts of veneration or sympathy. Children copy their parents. scholars their teachers. servants their masters : a hat. a necktie that is favoured by royalty—~~even~~ even a limp with which a royal person may be afflicted ~~is~~ is copied by loyal subjects. The inventions. or novelties. the imitation of which has gradually advanced civilization. have owed their adoption rather to the influence of authority than to their intrinsic merit. Religions have spread very largely through the conversion of ~~princes~~: and the conquests of the past owe their enduring interest to the impulse that has been given by the authority. or prestige. of the conqueror to the assimilation of a language. an idea. or a custom. Sympathy, on the other hand. urges us to imitate our own kind. If one ~~dog~~ barks. or a jackal howls. the ~~dogs~~ and ~~jackals~~ of the vicinity start barking or howling. Sympathy breeds the respect for the

crowd which impels us to act according to the opinions of the majority—to imitate behaviour which we see practised around us. A boy translated to a school, a recruit incorporated in a regiment, imitates a multitude of fashions, some of which may be ludicrous, and none would have attracted him in the environment of his home.

But habit also may be reinforced by feelings of reverence or sympathy. Inventors may search